SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (Chhapra) : With regard to item No. 17 which is being taken up now, I am on a point of order. I wish to make a statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Under what rule you want to raise this point of order?

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : My point of order relates to this particular item which is being discussed under Rule 193.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Do you not think that a point of order is raised under some particular rule?

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : I will tell you the Rule. It is under Rule 194 (2). I will link it up with it. Please let me say what I have to say.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is your point of order?

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : I will link it up with the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business. On 20.12.1996, the discussion on a Motion under Rule 193 was initiated by me and it related to the deterioration of sports standards in our country.

I had initiated the debate. It is stated in Rule 194 Clause (2) as follows :

> "The Speaker may allot two sittings in a week on which such matters may be taken up for discussion and allow such time for discussion not exceeding one hour at or before the end of the sitting, as he may consider appropriate in the circumstance. There shall be no formal motion before the House nor voting.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please come to your point of order.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : It is stated therein as follows:

> "The Member who has given notice may make a short statement and the Minister shall reply shortly."

I had initiated a motion under Rule 193. It was listed on 20th June, 1996 and after that it was again listed in the last Session on 16th May, 1997 and after that, it has just vanished and the second motion has been taken up without completing the first motion. I think it is an omission on the part of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will bring it to the notice of the Hon. Speaker.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : It has not lapsed. It was listed.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The matter has not come up before me. so, I do not know what the fate of your motion is.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : What has happened to the motion? I had initiated it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am not aware of its fate. I will bring it to the notice of the Hon.Speaker and whatever be the decision, the Hon, Speaker will convey it to you. What do you expect me to say?

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : The rules are very specific.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think the Lok Sabha rules are very satisfactory.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : I think it is an omission on the part of the House. I made the motion. I made efforts for it. When it was listed, I spoke on it and there was no reply. Two Sessions have passed and the Motion has not yet been completed. The Next Motion is taken up before its completion. I want a reply.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What ruling do you expect from me when I had not studied the case ? I do not know what the fate of your motion is. I do not know whether it is being rejected or accepted. I will bring it to the notice of the Hon. Speaker and he will convey his ruling to you tomorrow.

16.08 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Re : Heavy Loss of Lives and Property Due to Natural Calamities

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, the time allotted for this discussion is two hours and this is as important as an issue, like the Insurance Regulatory Bill. Both are important. So, if the House is prepared to sit and burn the midnight oil, then well and good. But otherwise, we should aim to conclude this Discussion under Rule 193 by 18.15 hours at the latest. Thank you.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura) : It is possible if the time is properly maintained. Otherwise, some will be given lot of time and others will not be given time.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are also on the panel of Chairmen. You know the exact problems.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : I am telling you because I practise it as I am also on the panel of Chairmen.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH (Seoni) : Mr. Chairman Sir, this discussion has been initiated to consider seriously the loss of lives and property caused by natural calamities in different parts of the country during past as well as during this year.

I am starting my speech with heavy heart and grief because after so many days of struggle for the first time we have been allowed to put forward our views before this House. I am very grateful to you for that.

This is not for the first time that loss of lives and property has been occurred due to natural calamities. Natural calamities have also been even occurred before independence. In my opinion there is a time for changes in the nature and if we accept it as natural calamity right from the first day than it is not right. Every change of nature creates both types of circumstances for any society or a country. If they wish it can became a bane or a boon. There is somewhere inhernt leadership which leads the society, you may call it a Government or a social worker. It would depend upon him whether they allow this change of nature to became a bane or boon. Everybody is aware about certain places such as Latur, Surat in Gujarat and the incident of Morvi Dam where the nature has turned violent and presently Gujarat, Bihar, Purvanchal region and Madhya Pradesh have been affected by the flood.

I am grieved at the earthquake occurred in Jabalpur. It has not happened for the first time there. Last time that devastating earthquake occurred at 4.22 minutes in the night of 22nd May. I have willingly talked about Latur. This has to be compared with other such places. However, this calamity has not occurred for the first time. These events had been taking place even before independence. I differ on this basic view wherein, the Government used to consider it a disaster on the very day of the incident. I would like to have a discussion about the situation in Jabalpur here. I am deeply grieved by it. Also, the actual picture and the seriousness of the loss of life and property suffered has not been reflected before the country. It is very unfortunate that efforts were made to conceal the loss of life and property suffered there. The Government there is responsible for this sin. It is a matter of sorrow. I am not at all happy to say all these things in the House and also I would not be satisfied with any sort of criticism. Had the Government taken interest in this matter, this disaster could have prevented and the people could have been saved from hardships.

Jabalpur is a backward area. There is no rail route. The country would have to think over it. Out of all the ordinance factories existing in the country most of them are located in Jabalpur. The State Government while providing the information about the calamities had demanded only 36 crore rupees as compensation. In the second round of discussion rupees 50 crores were demanded. After that 75 crores rupees were demanded from the Agriculture Minister in Indore. Again a demand for rupees 100 crore was made in the Jhabua Sabha.

The Government of Madhya Pradesh estimated 384 villages as earthquake affected villages. The date of the Government in this regard which is available with me identify 3200 villages as calamity affected.

My second view which I would like to bring to your notice is about the declaration of the Jabalpur Revenue border as calamity affected area by the Government of Madhya Pradesh. Whereas the epicentre of the earthquake was at Koshanghat village, 20 k.m. away from Jabalpur. The revenue border of the Jabalpur ends after 9 kilometers from there and the revenue area of Jabalpur is spread upto 82 kilometers. People living 82 kilometers away in the west and north from the place of epicentre are provided relief. After 9 kilometers another district known as Mandla which is a tribal district, is situated. It has equally suffered loss similarly as Jabalpur. Till date not relief work has been done in the Mandla revenue area. No development has taken place in that tribal area. People were living in huts there. Their huts have been damaged but no relief work has been iinitiated. This is not the allegation but the data available with the Government would show that no relief has reached in any part of Mandla district. Whenever we read the newspapers, we find that in Jabalpur division sometimes three districts have been formed, sometimes four or even five districts have been formed. Even today the Government have not been able to identify as to how much area has been affected by the earthquake. Except Jabalpur revenue area other places are taken very lightly as to nothing has happened there. It is true that the number of those killed in the earthquake, there number was not high. As the number was not high people are not at all ready to accept the seriousness of the earthquake here. The earthquake occurred here was more devastating than that of Latur. The number of deaths was low because the lifestyle of people here was different, the construction of their houses was different and they were sleeping outside of their house due to summer. But this does not mean that we should take the incidents of natural calamities so lightly. I am sorry to say that the Government did not make any efforts to gather any information about it. The entire area of Jabalpur division, Mandla, Balaghat, Shivani Chhindwara and Narsimhapur of Jabalpur district and besides it Damoh district in the Sagar division have also been effected.

The earthquake has also affected Hoshangabad, Raisen, Vidisha, Bhopal, upto Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh and some areas of Maharashtra. It means that we will have to identify the total area affected by the earthquake. Not only that, after this incident tremors of earthquake were also felt on the 4th of the month for the second time. Meanwhile, eleven tremors of earthquake were felt. Kundan was the epicentre of the earthquake occurred on 4th of the month. It measured 4.2 at the richter scale. It was also very devastating and its effect was seen from entire Kumdam block, which is a tribal block to the border of Jabalpur. The Government could not take any decision regarding it. We 17 members of parliament from Madhya Pradesh met the honourable Prime Minister. We invited him to visit this affected area and have also apprised him of the actual postition showing the reluctant attitude of Government of Madhya Pradesh on this issue. They have not given the actual data and the Government of Madhya Pradesh have conducted the survey of the affected area through "Patwaris". The "Patwaris" carried out the survey in a very typical manner as it was done under the British ruled India and they projected only 20 percent of the actual loss so as to save the State exchequer. The Government could realise this only after two days. On the third day the survey agency was replaced and Deputy Ranger was deputed to conduct the survey. Then after two days he was again replaced. On the sixth day sub-engineers of Jabalpur, Raipur

[Shri Prahalad Singh]

division were called on. The survey began for the third time. Now you can very well imagine when over three thousand villages have been affected to what extent the sub-engineers could have surveyed. As a result thereof proper survey could not be conducted. If the information could not reach to all the villages. Therefore, actual estimates of the loss could not be made. And the situation became worse day by day. The Government did not give any indication for transparancy at any stage.

I belong to that constituency and more than 2000 villages on my constituency were affected, therefrom. Three legislative constituencies of Jabalpur division fall under my area. I cannot visit all those two thousand villages. I have not opposed the Government from the day one. Congress has no people's representatives there. That area is represented by the Members of Legislative Assembly and the Members of Parliament from Bharatiya Janta Party. The people's representatives of Bharatiya Janta Party have given constructive suggestion and extended full coorperation to the Government for one month. I have been at Kosanghat for fifteen days and I met the Chief Minister and told him that you are a Congress man but I am not. I cited the earthquake that struck in Bihar in 1934. Earthquake of such an intensity had also struck in Bihar in 1934. At that time it was also rainy season. Shri Rajendra Prasadji had constituted a central relief committee and at that time the country was under British rule. He had given a call not to donate the amount to the Government but asked to deposit it with him. For this purpose he had formulated three points that at first the volunteer would visit the village to ascertain the numbers of people rendered homeless and the extent of help required for their rehabilitation? The volunteer used to visit the villages and after making assesment they used to return to the relief committee's office and give the information regarding the number of houses to be constructed for their rehabilitation.

That much quantity of goods and food items were arranged for them in the refugee camps so that the people who would came in those camps to take shelter atleast get their meals because they know that one would not survive if drenched in rain for 24 hours where as no one would die of starvation in two days.

This should had been our periority. But now-a-days the present Government is not considering any priority and has started a new game. It has star ted providing Rs. three thousand to each family in Jabalpur district. This way a new political game has come into existence. Each house has been divided to get the benefit. If a man has four sons then the family has been divided into four units, each having its own stoves stone. Mr. Chairman, Sir, two murders have taken place there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now you please conclude. Two hours are left and you have spoken for 20 minutes. Now 15 speakers are still left.

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH (Vidisha) : Hon'ble member is depicting the whole situation of the affected area, hence he should be allowed more time.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am telling you that two hours are left.

[English]

Let him have his say. He is speaking very well. I do not think, he requires anybody's support.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is our misfortune that we could not express our views in any forum.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I cannot do anything. Business Advisory Committee has allowed us only two hours and 15 hon'ble Speakers are yet to speak. I have to try my best to provide them an opportunity to speak. I am bringing it to your notice. You have spoken for about 25 minutes. Please try to conclude.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I was telling that Government is not paying attention to the priorities of Central Relief Committee. I have repeatedly written to the Chief Minister regarding the same. It is not so that if we have done any creative work we have not given any suggestion to the Government. I have had written a letter on 25th to the Chief Secretary who has been given the charge of calamity control. I had wirtten that he should not attend to anyone, he must do whatever he can do in this matter. Whatever has happened is something sad but what is going to happen in future is more miserable. Houses of some people have collapsed. It is a matter of deep sorrow but it is quite unfortunate that the Government are not considering those houses as damaged which are not collapsed. Fortunately, it was summer and people were sleeping outside, hence they survived. In rainy season they are campelled to sleep inside. They will sleep in their dilapidated house, and will meet their end. My apprehension has proved to be true after two and a half months.

Three school buildings have collapsed in Jabalpur city. Fortunately, the school building collepsed 22 minutes after the school hours. Three students got injured when other buildings collapsed. If there are no casualities it does not mean that gravity of devastation be under estimated. I have told the Chief Minister that we should not be like those leaders who are bent up to make the Society indolent. I am not against giving Rs. 30000/-. But what I suggested was that we should provide financial help after 1 month we should have provide list of business. But the Government is not paying attention to anything. All of us (Members of Parliament) has called on the Prime Minister and had invited him. At that time Prime Minister replied that the Government of Madhya Pradesh has not submitted to us any List of Business. We complained to the Chief Minister regarding this. The Chief Minister told that they have submitted it. That issue remained as it is. The Government of Madhya Pradesh has not submitted the action plan to the Union Government till date. He went to the extent of syaing that the statement given by Chidambaramjee is false. Chidambaramjee had given the statement that the Government of Madhya Pradesh has not submitted any action plan. Such type of negligence is being muted out with our people. I would like to submit that I am a Member of the Standing Committee of the Urban Development

Ministry. Shri Santosh Mohan Devji is its chairman. At that time, the Committee was about to go on a tour. I had wirtten to him that it is quite good that the study group is visiting Jabalpur. No other place can be better suited than it as Jabalpur is both a metropolis as well as a rural area. If we have to find out the criteria for urbanisation and development then I am requesting them to visit the place. We have made all the efforts, given every kind of suggestions but in vain. At last, the calamity of Earthquake has acquired a devastating dimension. Today, we are ready to admit it with a heavy heart that we are facing the calamity of earthquake. It is too late to take precaution. We could not get any relief. No one will believe us. After four months, all the three criteria of the Government proved us wrong as we are saying all these just to get same benefit. Hence, a serious discussion should be held on this issue seriously in the House. Jabalpur is an illustration of this. We must formulate any policy as action plan as natural calamity can occur in any part of the country. We must create a confidence in the sociely as to how we will combat these calamities. It can occur any time. We are the only reason for such natural calamity. It is our responsibility to set right the situation caused due to natural imbalance. I would like to request that I would conclude after making some points briefly.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have taken 26 minutes. 33 minute have been allotted to B.J.P. I think Patwajee also want to speak on the issue. It would be better if we could spare some time for him.

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur) : He started speaking at 4.10 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have noted down each and every minute. You please need not bother for it. I have learnt in Army that we should stick to time.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA (Chhindwara) : This is Lok Sabha. If I say this is not military there is nothing wrong in it. *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : I do agree that there is no camparison betwem military and Lok Sabha. I have only said that I learnt punctuality from the military. Patwajee you should not have any objection on it. I am sorry if you have any objection.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA : Unnecessarily, you are feeling sorry. I feel proud that you have learnt it from military.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have said that this is Lok Sabha not the military. I do not understand that you mean by it.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA : If you want to know as to what I mean by it . I can tell you.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have only said that I learnt punctuality from military. You have passed comment on it that this is Lok Sabha not military.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA : You are angry without any reason.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What you have told to me is objectionable. Prahaladjee you please start.

.....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not interrupt. Let him speak.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA : I hold you in high esteem .....*(Interruptions)* Please give us time to speak on this issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will allot time as per the directions of the Hon'ble Speaker. I spoke in your favour that you wanted to speak. Therefore, try to finish quickly.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA : I am praising you. But you are getting angry. Be kind enough to smile.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Patwaji, I am not concerned about my praise. But if someone criticises the army, I do not like it. Becuase I look upon the army as my mother. Hence, I do not like the army being criticised.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA: What makes you think that I am criticising?

MR. CHAIRMAN : If this is not criticism, then what is it? You said this is not the army but Lok Sabha. This means that the army are insignificant compared to Lok Sabha.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA : You are losing your temper unnecessarily.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am not getting angry. This is how I speak.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA : I am saying that I am proud of the armed forces. So is each and every citizen of the country .....*(Interruptions)* Do not misunderstand me. I am saying that discipline is different in army. Civilians have their own way of disciplane. All that I wanted to say is that the way you led a disciplined life in the army, is praiseworthy and worth emulating. If you ask me to be a military man, I would not be able to do so. I have expressed my disability. You misunderstood me.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think, time is over for us to join the army.

SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA : Kindly overlook my fault. You misunderstood me.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Well, there's nothing of the sort. Thank you.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH : There are some points which increase the gravity of this matter. The ordnance factories have suffered a loss to the tune of three thousand crore rupees. The Agriculture University has sent a list indicating

[Shri Prahalad Singh]

the less suffered and the Chief Minister has already sanctioned one crore rupees for it. The Jabalpur Mahanagar rural area alone needs two thousand crore rupees. There is Rani Avantibai Sagar dam, Bheemgada in Sivni and Tabe dam in Hoshangabad district. In addition to this, there are two more small dams, Mahagaon Danga and Mahgana dams which are situated at either sides of Gonda river have got damaged.The Government have not expessed any opionion in this regard. I have already mentioned about the survey work. Alongwith it there are some points about which we are more concerned. I would just like to submit that the Prime Minister had visited there and his attitude raised some hopes but now our hopes have shattered. When the Prime Minister visited there, a woman constable was forced to obey the orders and make request for relief works as a common citizen, such a heinous incident has taken place. This news has been published along with the picture in the Newspaper. Now, you can imagine as to what extent we could be cheated? What was the point that made us disappointed? The question is that as to why such a serious problem is being taken so lightly? I want protection from you. Recently, on 15th July, third earthquake has struck up there.....

MR. CHAIRMAN : How much more time would you take? Please conclude in two minutes because you have already taken so much time, which could have been enough for accomodating 5-6 hon. Speakers. I have with me a list of 15 Members.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH: I will conclude within two minutes. I would conclude by submitting that this is the third earthquake in this month. It has been measured 2.9 on richtor scale. The quake occurred between Narsingpur and Sivni. This has proved that the whole area is effected by the earthquake.

. MR. CHAIRMAN : Sir, through you, I would like to request the Union Government and the house to intervene in this matter to declare the entire Jabalpur area as an earthquake affected area. In addition to this, there can be some other small issues which need attention but keeping in view the paucity of time and your orders as well, I would just like to add that the Union Government would be responsible for the entire situation. I have tried to put before you the exact situation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Hazarika, please ensure the time-limit.

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA (Tejpur) : Sir, I assure you that I will not take a minute more than the hon. Member who spoke before me.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Thank you.

[Translation]

Congress Party has been allotted 28 minutes and four members of that party are supposed to speak. Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev has given me the list of five members, so please ensure the time-limit.

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA (Outer Delhi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to request you that this matter has been discussed twice earlier. B.A.C. has allotted two and a half hours for this matter. But considering the seriousness of this matter, kindly relax this time-limit to a certain extent.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Sharma, you did not participate in the discussion held earlier. The point is that discussions on Insurance Regulatory Bill have to be completed by today so that voting could be held on this Bill have to be completed by today so that voting could be held on this Bill on tomorrow at 12.30 hrs. or 1.00 hrs. All Hon'ble Members of the Congress Party are going to Calcutta tomorrow. So before me Hon'ble Chairman has taken this decision.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, discussions must be held on this matter.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not interrupt

.....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : You may please speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am trying to put forward my point.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : How can this discussion be run up so early you please remember.....

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not interrupt.....

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Every year in the Monsoon Session, discussion is held on the Flood and Drought situation.....

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will be recorded.

*.....(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can not interrupt the chair in between. This is wrong. You kindly respect the Chair.

*.....(Interruptions)**

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will go on record.

*.....(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am not ready to listen . If you will interrupt me then I am not ready to listen

*.....(Interruptions)**

* Not Recorded.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Why do you interrupt ? I was telling Sharmaji that he was not present at that time. The decision to finish the discussion on Insurance Regulatory Bill was taken by other Chairman who was in the Chair before me. I have no authority to change that decision. If discussion under Rule 193 will take much time then the discussion on Insurance Regulatory Bill will also be lengthy. If Members are ready to sit in the House till 10 PM then time of the sitting will be got extended. I am ready to do whatever the House decided.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I request you humbly with folded hands that whatever has been agreed upon is right and we are ready to obey it in a disciplined manner but at the same time we all Members had a feeling and we had experienced during past many years that whenever discussions were held under Rule 184 and 193, these were never completed in the scheduled time because the subject matter requires very deep thought and seriousness. This discussion on natural calamity is related to flood, drought cyclone and earthquake. So you discuss with the Hon'ble Speaker and get extension of time so that everybody could express their views. We can also discuss tomorrow. Those Members can speak in the beginning who want to go in the afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You consider, how many Members are left to speak on Insurance Regulatory Bill. I think, about 7-8 Members are left to speak on the matter.

.....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us proceed logically.

[Translation]

Eight Hon'ble members have to speak on the matter. After that Minister will have to give reply. I think that will take 1 hours 30 minutes or 2 hours. If discussion under Rule 193 goes upto 7 O'clock and after that Members are ready to sit for another 1 hours 30 minutes or 2 hours i.e. up to 9 O' clock then we may extend the time for half an hour.

SHRI KASHI RAM RANA (Surat) : Discussion under Rule 193 can be continued for tomorrow also.

MR. CHAIRMAN : In my opinion we cannot do this according to the Rules. According to the Rule only two days are fixed for discussion under Rule 193.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Rules can be relaxed. Discussion on natural calamity can not be concluded so early. You may please look into the matter. You are also an experienced person. There was flood in your state Haryana also. .....*(Interruptions)* You would also like to speak after coming from there. Every year during Monsoon session discussion on this subject continues for at least seven or eight hours.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : We will extend the discussion till tomorrow. At six O' clock we will resume discussion on the Insurance Regulatory Authority Bill, 1996 and conclude it today.

I am informed that according to Rules, discussions under Rule 193 can be extended to the next day also. So, that will be done.

.....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI B.K. GADHVI : Sir, what about the Members of the Congress party who are supposed to go to Calcutta tomorrow? They must be accommodated first.....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : No. It will be done strictly according to the time allotted to each Party.

SHRI B.K. GADHVI : If it is strictly according to the time allotted, then the Congress members would not be in a position to participate in the discussion because they are to go to Calcutta tomorrow .....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : A Congress Member standing behind you is to participate in it now

.....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI B.K. GADHVI : Sir, the Members of the BJP can speak subsequently and the Congress Members can be given some priority.....*(Interruptions)* The Congress Members should be given the first priority.....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West): Thank you, Mr. Chairman for having given me the opportunity.

[Translaion]

If they want to go then they can leave but let them participate in the debate within the prescribed time. The discussion under Rule 193 should be concluded today only. Whether it can not be extended for tomorrow?

[English]

In order only to accommodate the Congress Members, should we have to wind up the entire discussion? .....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI B.K. GADHVI : I did not say that we have to wind up the discussion.....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is all right. Shri Hazarika may speak now.

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA : Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Assam is a State mercilessly ravaged by natural calamities with relentless but unfailing regularity. The history of the bygone Century is full of endless pages after pages reverberating with shrill and agonising cries — Cries of the bereaved for the dead and the wounded, cries of the children who have been left orphans, cries of the farmers who have lost the fruits of the years's toil and tribulations. Be it floods, erosions, earthquakes, rains, storms or droughts, no part of Assam — be it in the Brahmaputra Valley or in the Barak Valley - is immune from the periodical onslaughts of natural disasters.

But today, I want to focus the attention of the House specially on floods because floods and erosions have become a curse and an anathema for the people of Assam. They have been sufering year after year without any solution in sight.

On the 15th of August 1950, when the nation was celebrating the Independence Day, that very evening, Assam and the North-East were rocked by devastating earthquake and its intensity was 8.7 on the Richter scale. One of the results of the earthquake was to raise the river beds not only of the river Brahmaputra but also of all its tributaries ; it also resulted in the change of the contours and courses of many of the river. Since then, Assam is being devastated and ravaged three or four times a year, by floods. Whether it is the Central Government or the State Government, nobody has bothered to take a long-terms view of the problem. Since it is happening regularly, this regularity is breeding, not contempt, but a kind of an apathy on the part of the authority both at the Centre and in the States. They have come to take it for granted. As a result of this, we find that so far in terms of prevention of erosion or control of floods, hardly anything has been done. And this has had disastrous consequences on the people of the State. The impoverishment which we have among the people of the State and the economic backwardness are due to, or the major cause, is the recurrence of floods in this State.

What is happening to the economy of Assam? If we analyse the factors and significant features of its economy, its becomes clear to us that the culprit in most cases is the devastating floods that visit the State regularly year after year. Today, Assam is predominantly an agricultural State. There is hardly any industry excepting tea and oil and 80 per cent of the people are engaged in agricultural occupations. But till today, we are importing huge quantities of foodgrains or different food articles. That is because there is hardly any irrigation facility worth the name and even one-third of that single crop that is grown by the farmers is damaged and destroyed by the floods that come every year in the State. As there is no irrigation, during the winter months, there is hardly any cultivation. It is because only 17 per cent of the land in Assam is irrigated as against the national average of about 27 per cent. Therefore, it is very important that the single crop that is grown which gives the wherewithal to the farmers, the large majority of the villagers, is saved from floods. But we have not been able to do even that over the years and the result is impoverishment and high unemployment eventually leading to the phenomenon of insurgency which has afflicted the State for the last so many years.

Now, the floods are not only causing losses to life and property but it is also having a disastrous effect on the infrastructure of the State. Floods are damaging the highways and roads. Bridges are regularly washed away. Rail and other communications have been affected. Therefore, one of the major impediments to the economic growth of the State is the phenomenon of regular floods that are visiting the State year after year. Therefore, the flood problem has got to be solved on priority and an urgent basis.

Now, what is the solution to this flood problem? A lot of studies were carried out. We have tried out minor irrigation projects and embankments. We find that one embankment may save a few villages but it may have adverse effects on other villages. Therefore, it does not provide a long-term solution and again, embankments cannot normally withstand the onslaught of floods which are very furious in Assam, and much more than other States because of our proximity to the Himalayas. Therefore, this can provide a short-term solution to a part of the population but it is not a long-term solution. For a long-term solution of the problem, the Brahmaputra Control Board was constituted about 20 years back and I am sorry to say that this Board is a stigma on the Central Government because it was kept defunct and non-functional for years together. Only recently, the Chairman and other office bearers were appointed in the Brahmaputra Control Board. But before that, before 11-15 years, it was without a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and without even a General Manager. Earlier the Board have carried out studies and surveys on the ways to Brahmputra and other rivers and tributaries. They have prepared the plans. But at that time, it was said that the plans were to be implemented by the States. Now, these are very major plans involving collosus of investment. The Brahmaputra Control Board, about 15 years ago, completed its survey and investigation on three projects and prepared the project reports. The three projects are Subansiri Dam Project, Dihang Project and Tipaimukh Project. The general perception was that if these projects were completed, then to a great extent, the flood problem and the erosion problem in Assam would be solved and at the same time, these being multipurpose projects, would provide hydroelectric power as well as irrigation facilities.

It would give a boost to the economic growth of the region. Initially, when this was being taken up, there was an Inter-State dispute. Arunachal Pradesh objected to the establishment of two big projects-Suhansiri and Dihang only on the ground that four of their villages with a population of 150 to 200 each would be inundated and submerged. They said that they would not agree to the setting up of these

projects. Therefore, it was hanging fire for all these years. But I feel that there is no other solution for flood problem and erosion problem except for us to go ahead with these projects. I have a feeling that if it is a failure for the projects to see the light of the day, it is the politicians who are to be blamed. We played politics with the lives of the people in the North-east year after year. It was not difficult for these States to get together and to hammer out a solution to the problem of inundation of only four villages. but there was stubbornness and some people were adamant and this was not allowed. The same thing happened with the Tipaimukh project where Manipur had objected to that project because some villages in Manipur would get submerged.

These projects also have international implications because these are linked to the Brahmputra. Therefore, China is involved. Myanmar is involved. Bangladesh is involved. There may be a need for us to negotiate the details of the projects with these countries also. Perhaps we have to think in terms of approaching the United Nations or other relevant agencies to enact laws to regulate flow of waters internationally in case of a river where the number of riparian States or countries is more than one. But recently, it is heartening to note that experts have found a solution. I am told that instead of one dam, if three dams were constructed in the case of the Suhansiri and the Dihang, these projects could go ahead. Arunachal Pradesh also has given its concurrence to the proposal. I am hoping that if these two projects come up, then Assam's worries will be short-lived.

Then, what about the investment? These two projects plus Thipaimukh would entail an investment of a magnitude of Rs. 1 lakh crore. Of course, it would generate electricity worth more than 20,000 megawatts . It will also irrigate huge tracts of land in all these States. But this investment is unavoidable and it is absolutely necessary. I would like to urge upon the Government to take these two projects very very seriously and approach the international financial institutions to provide funds for implementation of these two projects specially, if not Tipaimukh, becuase these projects only would not only bring a lot of benefits to the North-Eastern States but the rest of the country - the mainland - would also stand to gain substantially out of these projects. If we set up a 20,000 MW hydroelectric project today, at todays's costs, it will cost us, along with the associated transmission system, about Rs. 1 lakh crore. With the same Rs. 1 lakh crore, we can save Assam from floods and erosion. At the same time, we will get 20,000-25,000 MW of cheap and clean hydroelectric power to be supplied to the entire country. But this is a long-term solution to the flood problem.

On a short-term basis, what needs to be done? We find that there is almost a ferocious denudation of forests in the hill States and the frontiers of Assam. This deforestation has aggravated the flood and erosion situation in Assam and also in the North-Eastern States. Therefore, there is a need for us to emphasise on social afforestation and intensive afforestation to be initiated in the hill States which are closer to the rivers.

Today our main problem in the Brahmaputra is silting. The sediment load is increasing day by day. Because of denudation of forests there has been landslides and silt is being washed into the rivers and the river bed is going up and as a result the same volume of water is covering a mush wider area causing heavy floods. Therefore, afforestation is one solution to this and this measure must be taken up very seriously by all the Governments in the north-eastern region. Reduction in the sediment load, as I said through afforestation would help in reducing and mitigating erosion. At the same time, some amountof dredging in the Brahmputra and other tributaries will be needed to reduce the ferocity of the floods in the States.

Then again, a lot of State Governments cannot afford to pay far a big projects and thus they are resorting to minor irrigation, embankment and other projects. But they are being done haphazardly without any planning. Therefore, at times it is proving to be counter-productive. We must see that there is a Master Plan prepared for the entire river basin and whatever minor irrigation, embankment and other flood control measures are adopted do fall within the ambit of the Master Plan. Otherwise, these embankments may give some short term relief to some people, but in the long run it is bound to cause damage.

Sir, coming to certain mitigational measures, I would like to point out that what is needed is, perhaps, a multi-discipalinary team to combat flood damages in every State. That team must inciude people from streams of engineering, embankment, irrigation, forest, may be, publicity and education. It is because flood management has to be an intergated process. We must educate the people as to how to put up with floods ; how to live with floods. It is becuase we are seeing that in the foreseeable future, the flood problem is not going to be solved. So, they have to be trained and taught as to how to cope with flood situations as it arises from time to time. That could be done only if a multi-disciplinary agency is created in the States, including my own State of Assam.

16.58 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair]*

Sir, we also have 22 flood forecasting stations in the State of Assam. But they are not working properly. If the forecasting is made correctly, then perhaps, people will be better able to cope with the flood situation as it arises.

In the matter of floods, things are being left more and more to the States. But in case of the North-Eastern States, this policy could be pursued only at our peril. If we think in terms of the unity and integrity of the country it is absolutely essential that the Centre has to adopts a greater and more effective role in relation to the States in North-Eastern India. It is because these States are geographically insolated, economically backward and strategically so very important Therefore, in other matters as also in case of flood control and erosion, there is an imperative need for the Centre to play a greater role.

[Shri Iswar Prasanna Hazarika]

Sir, it is in this context that I welcome the decision of the former Prime Minister who gave North-Eastern India an economic package worth Rs. 6,100 crore which included Rs. 500 crore for flood control measures. It is not known whether that Rs. 500 crore would form a part of the Eighth Five Year Plan or the Ninth Five Year Plan or not. But we wanted that this Rs. 500 crore should be over and above the normal size of the Eighth or the Ninth Plan, as the case may be. If it is a rehash of the same thing, then there will be no additionality in it and this would disappoint the people of North-Eastern India. Everafter this Rs. 500 crore is given initially, then also much more funds would be needed but as a gesture we welcome it and we hope that the Centre is sincere with this sanction and that they would advance adequate funds to the State for flood control measures.

17.00 hrs.

But I am sorry to say that in 1997-98 a provision of only Rs.20 crore has been made out of this Rs. 500 crore. This has raised certain misgivings in the minds of the people of Assam. Therefore, there is a need for reassurance that these Rs. 500 crore will certainly be given. Giving only Rs. 20 crore may be because plans are not ready for implementation during the current year. But this Rs. 500 crore should be advanced against plans finalised to combat the flood situation in the State.

Similarly, in the Prime Minister's package, Rs. 480 crore are provided for Pagladia multipurpose project, But, since then, a decision has been taken that in the matter of flood control and erosion in Assan, whatever plans are taken up at the instance of the Brahmaputra Control Board or under its supervision will be financed 100 per cent by the Central Government. This is a very important policy decision that Centre has taken. If this decision is sincerely implemented, it will save not only the State of Assam but the entire North-East. But then, because the Centre has to bear the burden it should not dilly-dally in sanctioning the projects. The Centre having to bear 100 per cent of the expenditure should not be made a pretext for delaying the sanctioning of the project. I find that discussions are going on interminably and in spite of monitoring by the Prime Minister's office the Pagladia multipurpose project is hanging fire. So, I request the Government to take it more seriously and see that the project is sanctioned without further delay.

Finally, I come to earthquakes. Today's debate assumes great significance, at least for the people of Assam, because 1997 happens to be the centenary year of the most devastating earthquake that took place in Assam and the North-East in 1897. It took place on the 12th of June. the impact of that earthquake was so massive that the entire North-East including Shillong in Meghalaya was affected. People thought that after 100 years the earthquake may recur. I am told that as a result our insurance companies collected about Rs. 4.5 crore as premium in Shillong alone because people there were in a hurry to insure their houses and household effects against the danger, against the losses that might be caused by the earthquake which was predicted in certain quarters. There is a geophysicist by the name of Mr Negi who has predicted that in 100 years, again a devasting earthquake would take place in the North-Eastern part of India.....*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH : Please speak something on earthquake that rockeded Jabalpur.

[English]

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA : It is the Jabalpur earthquake that generated awareness in the North-East. The people there started thinking that if it is happeing in Jabalpur, it will not take very long for the earthquake to come to North-East. That is why there was a kind of hysteria created there.

Shri Negi, a geophysicist, has predicted it on the basis of his seismic calculations that another earthquake of the same magnitude will recur after 100 years. The earthquake of 1897 recorded 8.7 on the Richter scale which is the highest ever recorded in the world, not merely in India or Asia. Lakhs of people has died in that. This is the centenary year of that earthquake of 1897. Therefore, people of Assam look towards this august House for some solace, for some guidance, especially in the matter of disaster management.

Because as we have seen in the case of death of hundreds of people in the Amarnath yatra-whether it is death due to pilgrimage to religious places or whether it is death due to drought or rain or storm or earthquake or floods, our response has mostly been unplanned and off the cuff. There has not been any planning or proper thinking. We had not pondered over the issue as to how to manage disasters when it happens in future.

Therefore, what is needed in our country is a comprehensive and well thought out disaster management policy so that whenever such disasters take place instead of running around from pillar to post, instead of doing things haphazardly, we should know as to what is to be done, by whom, at what time and with what kind of resources.

I hope the centinary year of 1897 earthquake will force us to ponder over this issue seriously and to come out with a comprehensive rational disaster management policy. I would like to end by quoting the following from a paper of an expert group, which says, about natural disasters:

> " In India, 40 million hectares of land area is flood prone with average annual flood damage of Rs. 937.56 crore. The country's 5700 km coast line is exposed to propical cyclone and average loss suffered is Rs. 200 crore, which at times exceed Rs. 400 crore. about 60 per cent of the country's total area is susceptible to earthquake.

The cost of rehabilitation of Latur earthquake is Rs. 1044.06 crore, which killed 8099 people with property damage being Rs. 1100 crore.

Future generation with no empty land and with their complex social and physical built environments will have exposure to recurring disaster situations in an increasing rate. Perhaps, many of the cities with overburdened existing infrastructure, specially water, sewage, electricity are already at breaking point even under normal cirumstances not to speak about the ability to cope with widespread breakdown in the aftermath of a disaster. So, natural disasters are a force in the perpetuation of poverty of not only the current generations of many parts of the world but also the future generation as well.

The impact of disasters is disproportionately high in developing countries, with the losses to GNP due to disasters being about 20 times greater in the developing countries than in those which are more developed;

Disasters and poverty are mutually reinforcing;

Disasters, especially repeated ones, have a negative impact or investment and entrepreneurial incentives which are necessary for development ;

Disasters have special negative impacts on the non-formal economic sector, and in countries where this is an important sector, estimates of the costs of disasters are consistently under-estimated; and

For developing countries, it is not only more cost effective to prevent disasters than to recover from them but, if sustainable development is indeed the goal, it is imperative that disaster proneness considerations be incorporated into all development programming and planning. Not to do so, especially in areas of recurring disasters and especially for disaster types where the state of the art for prevention and mitigation is advanced, is both unnecessary and wastful of scarce development resources."

After having read out expert groups views I am surprised to find that in the Approach Paper to the Ninth Plan, on pages 61 and 62, flood control or the disaster control finds a reference only in the caption of the chapter. It does not find a place in the body or in the contents of the chapter. Therefore, it appears that the Government even the Planning Commission, is giving scant attention to this aspect of disaster management and management and prevention of natural calamities.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to take note of the gravity of natural calamities and the consequential effects on the people and the growth of the economy and address itself to the task of framing a comprehensive and rational disaster management policy.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura) : Thank you, Sir. I had been in my constituency for the last three days on foot, on cycle, on motorcyle, on speed-boat and on ordinary boat. It was a huge sea like thing that I saw there, Many of the dikes of the Zamindaris and of the Irrigation Department have broken down. No proper time working for releasing the water. Anyway since the time is very short, I will particulary draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Agriculture and also the Minister of Rural Employment. I know it will take some time to give you the full list. But what I have seen already, there is very few cattle feed. Cattle feed is not enough for cows ; rice is not enough for the people ; medicine is not enough. In my constituency, already 76,000 houses have collapsed. Many more are expected to collapse as the rain continues and the Sun takes his own time to throw his rays. The Agriculture Minister is here.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : You can ask the Government to send that report.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Our Government will be sending the report. Sending that report and later on, you may adjust with the State. I would request you to send some *ad hoc* grants. I am giving you advance information.

What I have said about my constituency also applies to other places. It is not that I am concerned only with my constituency. Midnapore district as a whole is affected by the floods. Added to that, on the question of Kerala, Karnataka, Gujarat and Bihar, I sympathise with them, Many of them have already sent what they want, to the Ministry of Agriculture. I hope, the Ministry will take proper care of it. In some cases, as I said, some ad hoc grants were also sent.

The earthquake recently devasted a part of Madhya Pradesh. As you remember, 1934 earthquake in Bihar was the worst possible earthquake as we saw as young people. The people who have suffered as a result of earthquake should also be helped.

As I said, in our district, 13 PHCs are already devastated and still rains to come, the situation is going worse. Medicines are not enough. More medicines should be sent. More money should be provided for making houses because now the house building grant is so meagre that even a verandah cannot be built with that amount. That kind of a situation has to be averted somehow or other, with the help of the Central Government and with the State Government moving quickly on the matter. The entire comunity is to be involved because only with the involvement of and help from the non-Governmental organisations, we can face this tremendous situation.

Advance planning is very very necessary. I would not go on speaking, as the time is very little. In every case, there should be advance warning system. From the beginning, the relief materials and things which will be needed should be kept ready at the headquarters of such places. These are some of the things. But a very few Governments do such things fully well before flood comes.

[Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee]

I am yet to see a Government fully prepared for a future flood to come; it is only when the floods come, the whole process starts. I hope in this particular situation, advance planning, quick movement, advance money and proper and quick dealing with those who are in big trouble all over the country due to this kind of a natural calamity has to be done.

With these words. I would conclude with the hope this discussion may be brief. But sometimes brief discussion makes much better results than going on and on just like that.

SHRI SUKH RAM : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in one of the parts of Mandi district, which comes under my constituency felt tremors of earthquake at 11.30 hrs. on thirteenth of last month and also in under sub-division which locates on epic centre reported to have suffered heavy-loss. Certain part received heavy rain-fall on the first day of the month. I myself visited the area and observed that the Harijan and muslim minority dominated localities in particular suffered the maximum loss. The people have rendered homeless because their houses collapsed and they were sitting in open. I saw some people holding tarparlin but there tarpalin were not sufficient enough to protect them from the rain. Some houses were partially damaged but not a single unit was suitable to reside since all of them were severely damaged. Those houses have become dangerous. I have received the information today that relief measures such as tents etc. which should have been provided by the State Government there, have not been provided at all.

The announcement was made to the effect that persons, whose houses have been damaged would be given fifteen thousand rupees and rupees eight thousand for those which became risky to live in. But according to information received by me, they are being allotted 2-3 thousand rupees each, which has been refused by many.

I would like to bring to the kind notice of the house through you to the point regarding burning of cowsheds of Gujjars in the constituency of hon'ble Chief Minister during the Assembly election held recently. That did not involve any loss of livestock but hon'ble Chief Minister visited the place which he should do so because it is his own constituency. Rupees Fourteen lakh were allocated there whereas, the people in Sunder Nagar at Mandi district, where heavy loss took place are being given 2 to 3 thousand rupees only. This is discrimination. I had brought the point to the notice of hon'ble Prime Minister only yesterday that people are in great trouble there. An old temple and mosque have been damaged. People are in great difficulty there. Although schools are closed now and people could have been provided shelter in schools if there was no alternative arrangement for them. But it has not been done there. I have requested the hon'ble Prime Minister to make an annoucement to atleast provide fifty lakh rupees of adhoc allotment immediately in the form of relief, discussion on which was going on here during zero-hour in the morning.

Funds can also be sanctioned for the construction of houses for pass out of discreationary funds of MPs. But that should also be included in such relief measures. But a strange situation has arisen in Himachal Pradesh. I think it is the first example in the country. There came a civil suit against me in the High Court filed with the political motivation that the money which should be allocated in two-three districts has not been disbursed and the High Court has issued stay-order against me without consulting me. But what is surprising therein is that the on the spot allocation which was being made by going there in middle of people and taking stalk of their demand, was also suspended. This is the case with my discretionary grants. If the stay order were not issued, I think, I could allocate the money in those areas as per rules. But the stay order has made me helpless. The three assembly areas in tribal-belt come under my parliamentary constituency. The allegation levelled is that money has not been disbursed there. I would have given 15-20 lakh rupees there in 2-2.5 years. There are 17 polling centres in my area. Each area is entitled to receive about 5.5 lakh rupees out of one crore rupees which I think has not been provided there. But this is not their problem because tribal sub-plan are there for them and money is not incurred during the limited season. Their problem is during the snow-fall, they remain cut off from the state as well as country for the five-six months. But these places have been connected with other parts of the country through satellite on priority basis by spending crores of rupees. Every area is not connected with telecommunication network in India. But this tribal area has been connected with the entire world. This is because of this fact that maximum number of votes have been polled in my favour despite the efforts made to bring bad name to me by politicising the matter. Deputy Speaker Sir, I do not want to intervene into the decision of the Court, But whether litigations would continue to be filed getting feed back from politicians. If the discretionary grants would continue to be suspended and stay order delivered in the like-manner, then how would you be able to spend the money properly. I would like to request through you, to the august House to think over it seriously. As long as that tribal area is concerned, the satellite network installed there covers every station which was stationed earlier only in Delhi. I have provided a separate station for the people living in far flung areas of Punjab, Haryana and U.P. etc. and in Himachal Pradesh itself whereas, earlier these States were having a single station in Delhi. This is my contribution for which I am being punished. Also, I could allocate my discretionary grants to the suffered there to construct houses. But I am helpless.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please come to the point.

SHRI SUKH RAM : Hon'ble Deputy Seeaker, Sir, I would like to request the Government through you, Sir and Minister present here that discretionary attitude is being adopted by political motivation. I would like to make a request to the hon'ble Prime Minister and the hon'ble Minister to provide money there unconditionally so that the people who are in trouble there, may be liberated therefrom.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh) : Mr. Deputy. Speaker, Sir, today we are discussing over the loss of life and property due to natural calamities in different part of the country. Earthquake in Madhya Pradesh, drought conditions in Orissa and excessive rainfall in Bihar have caused havoc. I would like to give thanks to the Minister of Agriculture under whose direction we got the paper from the Secretary of Science and Technology, Shri V.S. Rammurthy. There is details regarding State of monsoon at the end of July in different part of the country. We got this paper first time. From this paper, we come to know that which State has witnessed much rain. It rained much at the end of July. Bihar's plateau areas and plains, western Rajasthan and Lakshadweep have had excessive rain-fall till the end of July, 1997. Plain and plateau areas of Bihar have witnessed respectively 49 per cent and 22 per cent excessive rain than normal. The paper circulated to us by the Meteorlogical department brings out this situation very clearly. Many parts of the country are flooded according to the news published in Newspapers. Flood has come in Kerala, as usual in Assam and other parts of the country but it rained excessively in Bihar at the end of June, first and second month of July as it never rained before. Due to which huge devastation occurred. Maximum devastation occurred in the recent years. Before that, it rained excessively in the year 1976 and 1987 resulted in floods.

This time huge devastation occurred. 27 districts have been badly affected by the floods. As a result of it boats were rowed for 10-12 days in city like Patna. People kept themselves inside the houses. Huge devastation has occurred in outer side of Patna, my constituency Brah and Nalanda. Not a single road is left undamaged. Except National Highway, all the State highways have been damaged. It is futile to discuss about rural roads which come under Rural Road Engineering Organisation. No road is left undamaged. The road under P.W.O. which are also called State Highway have been damaged there. The position is very bad in Nalanda and Patna Districts. All roads have been demaged there. The condition was bad in 27-28 districts in Bihar. Same condition was seen in Madhya Pradesh, Jahanabad, Monghyr.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Minister, hails from Madhubani, which has not witnessed vast devastation. But from the information it seems that position is very bad but no relief works have been initiated by the State Government. You would be surprised that .....*(Interruptions)* what the Minister is saying?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He is saying that no report has come from the Government.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I would also like to say this. He is saying quite right. I would like that he himself should say something about it. This is our allegation that flood affected people gathered in Punpun Block which falls under my constituency for relief. It was raining incessantly, it was publicised that polythene would be provided to those poor, backward, scheduled caste people whose houses had been damaged so that they could cover their heads. The B.D.O. and C.O. were not present there when 2-3 thousand people reached there. People had to take shelter in Police Station. Large number of people were present there but only 100 pieces of polythene were available. This place is at a distance of 16 k.m. from Patna but officers opened fire to disperse the affected people. 10 k.m. onward there is Masodhi Block which comes under Ramashray Baba's constituency area Where police opened fire. Relief measures where also mising there but government was engaged in the game of majority and minority, that how to manage resources for majority. The Government was worried about majority but not of flood affected people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in the reply to the question of Shri K.P. Singh Dev and Shri Kodikunnil Suresh given in this House on 29th July it was stated that the demand of money has been made by different States. Andhra Pradesh has demanded for hailstorm, Gujarat and Kerela for flood, Madhya Pradesh for earthquake and Sikkim for landslide. Name of Bihar is not mentioned in it. Do you know that meterological Department informed that maximum devastation has occurred in Bihar. If it is seen from this point of view then demand should had come from Bihar. Mr. Deputy. Speaker, Sir, we discuss over drought conditions after every Monsoon session in the House but for the first time we are discussing over the affects of flood, drought, earthquake and lanslides altogether. The reply of the Government is that there is National Calamity Fund out of which 75 percent would be given to State and the State would incur 25 percent. We have given two instalments, one instalment has been issued etc. The fund is not adequate in National Calamity Fund. It has only 700 crore rupees for five years out of which 539 crore rupees have been released. I do'not know what would the Government do on such a situation as arises next year? When Minister gave the reply in detail of a question then also he put the same figures before us that from where the demand comes and how much amount from National Fund for Calamity Relief. But Mr. Dy. Speaker, Sir, when we would consider over it and see the calamity Relief Fund of States then State like Bihar whose population is 10 percent of the country's population suffers from flood and drought repeatedly.

Some days ago there was newspaper report that a glacier in Nepal in Himalayas is about to melt, once melted it will release eight crore cubic feet of water.

It will create havoc in entire North Bihar, it will devastate all the dams, entire irrigation structure and it will release so much water that everything would be devastated by it. We cannot imagine about the terrifying situation there. We would like to know from the hon'ble Minister as he hails from that place and he must be concerned about it personally but it is the concern of all of us and the country whether it is true. The news were supressed about it. The Government gave no clarification about such a frightening news. We would like to know what is the exact position. Are the citizens being warned before hands, whether relief measures are being taken? Minister would give clarification about that. We would like to say that State like Bihar has such a situation and drought and floods come here repeatedly.

[Shri Nitish Kumar]

Earlier only North Bihar used to be affected by floods but today entire Central Bihar falls into the grip of floods. Today Shri ChanduMajra ji was on his legs in the morning and no one was paying attention to his words. But it was painful to us. He said that during his visit to Bihar it was told by the people of that area that there are two crops - one is Kharif and another is the crop of relief. He was speaking in a lighter vein but our feelings were hurt. The soil of Bihar is very fertile. there is no such crop of relief. What relief the State Government can provide? Relief will be provided by the Central Government only. The flood and famine relief code prevailing in Bihar was framed during British period and has been accepted by the Government even after independence. This code has been updated from time to time. If you go through thata code, you will find that 'Anchal Adhikari' is authorised to distribute free ration for one week in the areas affected by floods or by other calamities. But you will be surprised to note that though an ordinary 'Anchal Adhikari' is authorised to distribute gratituons relief for one week but not Sub Divisional Officer, D.M. Divisional Commissioner or Relief Commissioner and what relief the Government of Bihar could provide? However, even this announcement to distribute relief is made at the Chief Minister's level. It is shameful. For this a Cabinet meeting is held and announcement is made that ration will be distributed for one week, and he is saying that one crop is Kharif and the other is relief.

According to the answer given by the Government under State Calamity Relief Fund, Rs. 49 crore 4 lac were given to Bihar in 1995-96, Rs. 51 crore 96 lakhs in 1996-97, Rs. 54 crores 83 lakhs have been given in 1997-98, Rs. 57 crores 63 lakhs are given in 1998-99 and Rs. 60 crores 7 lakhs for 1999-2000. It means that Rs. 273 crores 53 lakhs under Calamity Relief Fund were given during the entire period of five years. But what is the situation? One part of my constituency comes under Nalanda district and District Megistrate of Nalanda sent a report to the State Government that on damaged roads and damaged. A large embankment known as 'Alag'. collector has demanded Rs. 12 crores for repair of these damaged roads and embankment. Houses collapsed are not included in this because if they report about it then they have to provide relief for that also. Even the crops destroyed included in that Report. The result is seeds are not available to the farmers. Whereas the calamity Relief for the whole State is just Rs. 54 crore 83 lakh for this year. What will happen with this amount? It is just a drop in the ocean. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this relief is very less and our demand is very high and if this is the situation, then I would request Agriculture Minister to see the figures of the whole country. Uttar Pradesh is little bigger than our state. We have 324 MLAs and in U.P. there are 425 MLAs. Similarly 54 members of Parliament are elected from Bihar whereas from U.P. 85 MPs are elected. It means their number is 50% more than us. But whatever U.P. is getting is still less and whatever we are getting is far less. But the people of Uttar Pradesh are not affected by floods to the extent the people of Bihar are. However, in Eastern region of U.P. Bihar like conditions prevail. But the western area is fully fertile. Irrigation arrangements are very good there. They are utilizing every drop of Ganga water and. For example, people residing nearby Hardwar are fully utilising that water. The Calamity Relief Fund for U.P. is Rs. 132 crore for this year. Every year floods and drought destroy the areas including tribal belt and north Bihar. Rivers momating from the Himalayas and Nepal destroy the whole of North Bihar. If the Himalaya glaciers melt, gets affected. In spite of all this, Calamity Relief amount is so meagre. Mr. Deputy Speaker, through you, I would like to submit that every year we discuss floods and drought in the House but that is of no avail because at the time of monsoon, we are again ruined and devastated. Whosoever is the Minister or which ever is the Government always a stereotype reply is given. I would, therefore, like to request that though a huge amount has already been spent on flood control and relief since we attained freedom, no permanent arrangment has been made for water managment. The water flows into the sea and is wasted. Therefore, I would like to submit that a long term plan should be made and implemented for this purpose. Without this, we will keep on discussing the floods and drought. Thus some areas will get excessive rains whereas other areas will be affected by drought and we will think that we have fulfilled our duty only by discussing the issue in the House. But the people of this State will keep on suffering. We are going to enter 21st centrury? Where we will like to take present India to the 21st century. On one hand satellite we are trying to explore, Mars, we are setting up sub station in the space and so on, and on the other hand, we are destined to face calamities like floods. Therefore, I submit that an enduring plan should be chalked out for this purpose. At the same time, concrete steps should be taken to help the people affected by floods recently. I would request the Minister of Agriculture to do something as he belongs to Bihar and knows better about that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to make one more submission also. The other day when we were discussing floods and firing on flood victims, some hon'ble members interrupted us saying we were discussing law and order in the State. We were not discussing law and order. Bihar is going to ruins. Please save Bihar from being destroyed because if Bihar is ruined then the country can not be saved. This same Bihar has shown a new path to Gandhiji in the struggle of independence. Please do not let that Bihar be ruined.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal) : Champaron has done that.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Yes, I am talking about same Champaran. Therefore, I request that this joke with Bihar may be stopped. If some irregularities are going on there, then these should be set right. To whom should we complain? Minister of Agriculture is from Bihar and he is also looking after Relief and Rehabilitation. We all know he is going to reply to our points.

So we will request after keeping apart from it, that Government of Bihar may not have sent any report, we know this and it is clear from its reply also, which subject to correction, to which we have mentioned just now. It was the

question asked by Shri K.P. Singh Deo It is clear from the reply given to this question that the Government of Bihar hasn't written any letter regarding the damage. But we all are sitting here.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR (Begusarai) : The Government of Bihar has no time.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Yes, the Government of Bihar has no time, If we discuss it then you will say that the time is being wasted. There the game of politicians will go on. The game of politics will continue but in real sense the humanity is crying with pain, you make some arrangement for its security. .....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI G.L. KANAUJIA (Kheri) : The Chief Minister there is bringing up the Childern, doing other works, how will the rule.....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : The way in which administration is going on is the ill-fate of the people of Bihar. They have to tolerate this situation for some more days. This situation will not continue for long, definitely there will be reform in it. We have such belief, the war is on against it. We are fighting, this is a separate issue. But here we will urge the Minister of Agriculture that the Government of Bihar will not sent any report to you. It will not ask you to go there and inspect the situation to assess the situation. But you have also some responsibility. But you have decided in principle that at whatever extent the situation may aggravate the Central Government will not intervene. Its alright, you don't intervene. Let the people die, but in this matter you can definitely intervene. It is your right because you give ¾ money. Besides Government of India has created the national fund for Natural Calamities which is in your hands. We will ask you that don't go into the issues that this time your area has not come under floods. According to the meteorogical office district Madhubani has not much affected by floods. There the rainfall is sufficient and adequate. There was no excess rainfall This is clearly given in you figures and we also know it. Do not bother about that. You are the Minister of Agriculture for the whole country. So you please see the people living in backward areas and take some action at your level, assess the situation on your own, write to concerned collectors, that they may send report about their area, and direct from here on that basis.

The Government of Bihar will not do anything, whatever damage has been done, can be compensated but you alone cannot do anything. In the Employment Guarantee programme every block has been covered under which you can do the repair and restoration of the assets. If you will not give any direction from here then the situation will continue as usual. You sanction money to build houses, but there it is said that we make houses, whereas the State Government does not contribute any amount of money, even then it is said that we make houses. Hon'ble Agriculture Minister, you please ensure that the houses of only those people have been repaired, whose houses have been damaged. It may not happen that those who have suffered loss of houses may not get the benefit but under the construction drive likely to start there some new houses are constructed by this money. So, you have to initiate the action for the protection of needy persons. No matters that you don't assess the damages but to provide relief to the people, for their rehabilitation, to compensate the damage that is done to their assets take steps at your level.

I would like to request hon'ble Agriculture Minister that you are an intellectual. Hon'ble Prime Minister if an intellectual, you hails from Bihar, he is elected to Rajya Sabha from Bihar. Both of you must pay a visit. If the Prime Minister is unable to go then hon'ble Agriculture Minister, you must visit definitely. You after visit Bihar but this time you should visit the whole area. Do not retrun after assessing the situation in your own constituency, visit, Central Bihar also. Do not confine upto action taken in Patna and having discussion with the officers there, because the officers have no information . Yesterday itself I tlked to the collector of Nalanda regarding the position of relief, I talked the SDO (Floods) because there is no sense in talking the D.M. Patna, you also know this. I also talked to the commissioner of Patna, but of no avail. The flood officers have said that our requirement of foodgrains is 3500 quintal. Whereas we receive only 1500 quintals. You know that who gets the relief. There are some people of special category. Suppose that there are people belonging to SCs. But in flood affected people there are non-SC landless people also. They too have nothing to eat. As you do not have plenty so you are distributing it to the SC people. But non SC landless people are also there who should get it too. They too are not getting the G.R. You say that you have sufficient stock of food grains. We will not allow a single person die of hunger. How far this declaration stand. Personally, daily we get the complaints but even after these complaints the situation is still as it was.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is nothing more that putting the point. So we are saying to put up the point and there is no meaning of it. So I will request you, I pray to you that in order to free the people from floods, due to which serious situation has arisen, please do something for that areas. In some areas where after floods epidemic conditions are prevailing. There is no D.D.T. for spray. You might be aware that cholera has once again started spreading in new form. There is no arrangement for the treatment of cholera affected people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in this situation in Bihar we would like to request to hon'ble Minister that whether it is the question of G.R., whether the question of taking the serious situation, whether the question of disease that is spreading and the steps to be taken to save their lives or whether the question is of destruction of paddy seeds due to which crops have been destroyed, do something for them. You are Minister of Agriculture. You know that daily new variety of paddy are being developed. I would like to request you that paddy seeds should be provided to the paddy areas particularly of Bihar, at war footing and of the variety that even if it is sowed at the end of the season it should give crops, i.e. seeds which are meant for late sowing season,

[Shri Nitish Kumar]

should be provided. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the State Government they will do nothing. Hence, I would like to request hon'ble Minister that he should send his officials there and make the arrangement thereto. The variety of paddy seeds should be provided there which even if sowed late then it may yield some crop and may compensate the loss to some extent. This much I request you and with these words, I conclude.

SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN (Barpeta) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, we are discussing a very important subject. Every year, there is a loss of life and property due to natural calamities affecting different parts of our country. But what is more important is that, it not only affects the present situation, but it also creates problems for the future development of our country. Every year, during the Monsoon Session this House discusses the problem of flood, drought and other natural calamities in different parts of the country. But even then there is no appreciable improvement in the situation in the country.

Sir, it is true that every year the flood prevented drought prone areas are increasing. So, whatever relief is given in the name of Natural Calamity Relief Fund could not change the situation. It touches only the fringe of the problem: it does not touch the heart of the problem. but some immediate relief should be given to the suffering people when they are affected by flood or drought. But the basic point of tackling the issue on a long term basis still remains. Therefore, a comprehensive policy is necessary to tackle this issue.

Sir, I come from Assam and my hon. Colleague from Assam, Shri Hazarika had already elaborated as to how the people of Assam are practically living with flood and drought every year. Every year there is flood in Brahmaputra and Barak rivers and their tributaries which affects a lot of people and also damages crops, properties etc. There is recurring loss to infrastructure like roads, bridges etc. There are two valleys in Assam, the Assam Valley and the Barak Valley. In both these valleys the people are affected by flood and drought.

I would like to say in this House that last year one of the districts in Assam was affected very much due to flood in Brahmputra river and the roads have been totally damaged. So, the people could not move from one place to another. There were no bridges in that area. This kind of situation was there.

Every year, the Brahmputra river, the Barak river and their tributaries are creating problems for the entire people of Assam by damaging the economy of Assam. The entire House is aware that Assam is an agriculture-based State. An overwhelming majority, more than 80 per cent, of the people who live in the villages are mostly agriculturalists. There is practically no industry except tea and oil. Naturally, the entire development of the State, as the matters stand today, depends on the development of agriculture. But what we have seen during these years is that agriculture could not be developed because there are no measures for controlling flood and soil erosion. Floods are damaging the economy and the soil erosion caused by floods in the Brahamputra river, the Barak river and other tributaries is eating away the cultivable lands of the State. Even though there are 32 lakh hectares of cultivable land, only two lakh hectares have been covered under tea cultivation. The cultivable land in Assam is very fertile, but due to floods and other natural calamities, the production is very low. There is no development in agriculture because of the loss created by the floods in the Brahmputra river, the Barak river and other tributaries. There is a loss in the production of foodgrains in the State. Every year, because of the shortage of foodgrains, our State has to import foodgrains from other parts of the country. There was time when Assam has to pay around Rs. 700 crore for the import of foodgrains. It is now said that it would be more than Rs. 700 crore. In our State, about Rs. 1,000 crore has been spent on the import of foodgrains. Naturally, if there was proper utilisation of this land, the entire amount of Rs. 1,000 crore could have been devoted or spared for the development of agriculture or other activities in Assam.

We have a very huge amount of water resources. I am told that the hydroelectric potential available in the North-East is around 40,000 MW. But there is no harnessing of these water resources for generating hydroelectricity or for irrigation or for drinking water. If this hydroelectric potential is harnessed or exploited, then we could generate more than 40,000 MW of hydroelectric power. But this is not being done. There is no proper management of the water resources in that part of the country.

There is a Brahmaputra Board. Around 20 years back, it was constituted by an Act of this Parliament. But for many years, the Brahmputra Board was headless ; it had neither the Chairman nor any other officials. They have prepared some programmes or some master plan. But this master plan is only on paper and it is yet to be executed. If it is executed and if the water resources are fully utilised, then this underdeveloped State of Assam could become a flourishing State.

So far as irrigation is concerned, practically, they have taken very few measures. They have done some paper work, but actually the irrigated land is around 2 lakh hectares, which is around six per cent. Due to non-utilisation of these water resources, not only the economy but the people are also suffering.

18.00 hrs.

I want to say that there is a lot of ecological imbalance in that area. While there is flood in some places, there is drought in other places in the State. Uncertainty prevails among the peasantry in certain areas of Assam. Drought conditions prevail in many parts of the State and because of the drought conditions, the peasants are unable to plant the seedlings. They are apprehensive that flood may come and damage their crops. Every year, it causes loss of crores of

rupees. There is very unsatisfactory situation because at any moment, there may be floods; at any moment, there may be drought and this situation has been created because of the law of ecological imbalances in that entire area.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If you want to speak more, you can continue tomorrow.

18.02 hrs.

RE : INSURANCE REGULATORY AUTHORITY BILL, 1996

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum) : I was on the point of long-term funds. If we look back, there is a curious background. Initially, there was only one type of long-term fund which was provided by the Government Security Act which matured after 15 or 20 or 25 years and subsequent to that, the insurance companies also came up trying to generate long-term funds in the private sector. That collapsed and then the public sector has to intervene to take over generation of long-term funds for the country.

Today, there is another kind of long-term fund which has been collected. It is known as teakwood fund. Money is being taken and plots of land are offered for teakwood farming and after 25 or 30 or 50 or 100 years, these funds would be returned in a colossal amount and we know the uncertainties there. but this is only one aspect of it. It is not for generating long-term funds that the insurance industry grew. I think Shri Jaswant Singh did correctly mention that insurance came up. He mentioned industrialisation. He could have said capitalism. But the point is not that. Why did it come up at that time? There was insurance earlier to that, not in one form. The stability of the feudal system and the existence of the large joint family was functioning as insurance to the community. With capitalism, insecurity became the order of the day and new forms were attempted so that security of individual in terms of future and development can be guaranteed.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh) : I would like to confess to my friend that I did indeed raise this issue because I think this is a substantial issue and this is the kind of issue to which policy-makers ought to address themselves and I am very glad that my hon. friend is addressing himself to a thought which I submitted to the House, that thought being that insurance is foreign to us whereas banking is not. The concept of insurance is foreign to us because I submitted that insurance is the outcome of industrialisation and dislocation of societies from rural to urban agglomerate resulting in consequential urban uncertainties.

Therefore, what was earlier provided by the two factors in Indian life and still continues to be provided wherever rural India is able to keep its--you would I know, disagree but I assert- purity in tacts insurance as such against death, deprivation, disability and disease was provided either by society or by family. Now, both are coming apart. But the necessary, integral of industrial revolution has not yet really dawned in India except where you find enormous excrescence of urban growth. The word earlier was 'nagar' from which was derived 'nagrik'. Yesterday's nagar or nagrik is neither today's metropolis not today's citizen, Therefore, when we adopt these western ideas wholesale, without questioning and say insurance is the answer, we must address them minduful of this. It is just in the form of a query that I am intervening. I am sorry that this is not a routine kind of intervention but because we now seem to have time to do it that I am intervening .....*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : I think the debate will continue for another four or five hours! The point has to be clarified.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : These are very valid points. Please continue.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : Really speaking, I had not intention of intervening in today's debate.....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : It is so welcome. Because of your intervention, hon. Deputy-Speaker would be kind enough to extend time to me! .....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : Reacting to what I submitted earlier and I said it that banking is natural to India. About banking, we have to learn nothing from the West, For example, I cite the concept of *Hundi.* The concept of *Hundi* is as old as Indian society. It is ingrained in our social of *Hundi* is as old as the Indian society. It is ingrained in our social conscience. The arrival of a *Hundi* and the non futhlment is really today's L.C.--the arrival as I was saying, of a *Hundi* and the non-honouring of that *Hundi* was a matter of honour. No law then said that you must honour that *Hundi.* This was born of a social thought. We destroyed that social thought. We say that we will now adopt all the Western banking practices without the attendant, necessary wherewithals. This is a transplant of an idea. But in the case of Insurance, it is even more of an alien transplant. Banking is natural to us, not Insurance. Therefore, you have, I think, roughly Rs. 47000-48000 crore with LIC today. But of the 90 and odd crore people of India, how many people are covered by insurance? Is it 55 or 56 lakh ?.....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : If you have patience, I will cover it later.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : Secondly, why did attempts at making insurance of agricultural sector, crop insurance, cattle insurance and animal wealth fail? Certain ideas arise in North Block and you transplant it. Thirdly, you say industrialisation is equal to capitalism. Therefore, insurance is equated to an ill of capitalism. That is where the dialectical question arises. That is where the difference arises.